

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
1 FENN STREET, SUITE 201, PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01201
TELEPHONE (413) 442-1521 · FAX (413) 442-1523
Massachusetts Relay Service: TTY: 771 or 1-800-439-2370
www.berkshireplanning.org

SHEILA IRVIN, Chair
KYLE HANLON, Vice-Chair
MARIE RAFTERY, Clerk
CHARLES P. OGDEN, Treasurer

NATHANIEL W. KARNS, A.I.C.P.
Executive Director

October 13, 2014

Ms. Catherine Nadals
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
Washington, DC 20423

RE: EA in AB 733X and AB 1121X

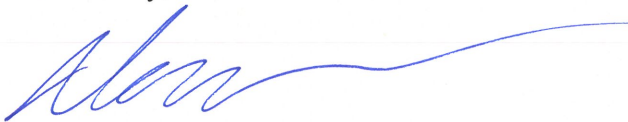
Dear Ms. Nadals:

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comment on the Environmental Assessment related to abandonment exception in Berkshire County by the Coltsville Terminal Company and The Housatonic Railroad Company. BRPC concurs with the two conditions and the conclusion that pursuing a full Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary. BRPC is supportive of the abandonment as it is consistent with *Sustainable Berkshires*, the regional sustainability plan, as it will allow for further expansion of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail. It is also consistent with the 2012 Berkshire Regional Transportation Plan, adopted by the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization in August 2011, as it will allow construction of an additional segment of the Berkshire Bike Path, the north-south bicycle arterial planned from Williamstown to Sheffield.

We support the abandonment of the Coltsville spur with the stipulation that the ownership interest be acquired by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, which owns the northward sections of the former North Adams Branch line between the Coltsville spur and the active Adams Branch Line owned by Pan Am Railroad. Consolidation of public ownership of this historic railroad line would be in the public interest.

I appreciate you contacting us for input on this matter.

Sincerely,



Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP
Executive Director